

FAITH PROMISE

What is Faith Promise?

The Church of the Nazarene acknowledges that Faith Promise giving is a biblical method used by many local churches for raising financial support for world evangelization. For our denomination, it is dedicated specifically to the mission support of the Church of the Nazarene through various offerings promoted by Nazarene Missions International (NMI).

People are asked to make an annual faith promise for Nazarene missions. Faith is essential. The people are urged to seek God's will as to the amount they should promise. The total commitment may be paid however the individual decides – weekly, monthly, or in a one-time gift for the year.

Faith Promise is not to be confused with:

- A pledge—no one will remind individuals of the exact amount they owe on their Faith Promise giving
- The tithe—a Faith Promise is a love gift to God, to be given beyond the tithe
- A substitute for mission offerings—In addition to Faith Promise, opportunity should be given for people to give to missions. Such offerings allow those not participating in Faith Promise an opportunity to give to missions; and, for those who are, it provides additional opportunities for giving as the Holy Spirit leads.
- A cure-all for a church's financial problems

What does my giving to faith promise do?

The main priority is reaching the world for Christ through the payment of the World Evangelism Fund. Many offering opportunities exist for you to give toward missions, Alabaster, World Mission Broadcast, Nazarene Compassionate Ministries, deputation, and so forth. The *NMI Handbook & Constitution* provides guidelines regarding what offerings may be included in Faith Promise with the World Evangelism Fund as the foundation. However, **Faith Promise is not intended to replace missions offerings.** Opportunity should be given for people to give to missions. Such offerings allow those not participating in Faith Promise an opportunity to give to missions; and, for those who are, it provides additional opportunities for giving as the Holy Spirit leads.

Where did Faith Promise originate?

Although a number of people have come up with similar giving plans, the Faith Promise plan, as we know it, was developed in the late 1800's by Dr. A. B. Simpson, founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Feeling a burden for the lost of the world, Simpson was influenced by the writings of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 8-9.

Is Faith Promise Biblical?

The basis for Faith Promise is found in the Bible. In fact, a Bible study of 2 Corinthians 8 & 9 might be beneficial prior to your church's Faith Promise event. Also, when promoting Faith Promise, use some of the following passages...

(This is not a complete list; please check your Bible's concordance for more suggested scriptures.)

FAITH PROMISE SCRIPTURES

“For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God’s will.”
(2 Corinthians 8:3-5).

Scriptures on the Great Commission

- ◆ “He [Jesus] said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.’”
(Mark 16:15).
- ◆ “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you”
(Matthew 28:19-20).
- ◆ “Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples”
(Psalm 96:3).
- ◆ “And the gospel must first be preached to all nations”
(Mark 13:10).
- ◆ “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”
(Acts 1:8).
- ◆ “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come”
(Matthew 24:14).

Scriptures on Faith

- ◆ “Without faith it is impossible to please God”
(Hebrews 11:6).
- ◆ “Everything that does not come from faith is sin”
(Romans 14:23).
- ◆ “The righteous will live by faith”
(Romans 1:17).
- ◆ “Have faith in God”
(Mark 11:22).

Scriptures on Stewardship

- ◆ “But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth”
(Deuteronomy 8:18).
- ◆ “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked”
(Luke 12:48).
- ◆ “Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver”
(2 Corinthians 9:7, NRSV).
- ◆ “Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously”
(2 Corinthians 9:6).

How do I set my Faith Promise goal?

Faith Promise is an excellent way to give to missions throughout the year. **When you set your Faith Promise goals, don't forget to include:**

- ◆ World Evangelism Fund
- ◆ LINKS cash assignment
- ◆ District NMI allocation
- ◆ District project specials
- ◆ Work & Witness projects
- ◆ Approved Mission Specials (example: special 90th Anniversary Offering)

Remember: *Faith Promise should not replace the Thanksgiving and Easter offerings for the World Evangelism Fund. Those who are on faith promise or who have not made a faith promise commitment should be given an opportunity to participate in these special offerings.*

The following items (allocated amounts) **may also be included** in your faith promise goal; *however*, the opportunity should be given to allow the entire congregation to participate in these offerings at their specific times:

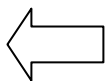
- ◆ Basic deputation offering
- ◆ Alabaster
- ◆ World Mission Broadcast
- ◆ Nazarene Compassionate Ministries
- ◆ Local and district NMI expenses

Faith Promise excludes other local church expenses, including:

- ◆ Building payments
- ◆ Church utilities
- ◆ District budget
- ◆ Educational budget
- ◆ Pensions and Benefits

Faith Promise Policies

- ◆ The World Evangelism Fund shall be paid first before considering Approved Missions Specials.
- ◆ There shall be no diversion of specified offering to another fund or use.
- ◆ The confidence of the people shall not be broken.
- ◆ All faith promise monies should be accounted for through the local NMI treasurer.



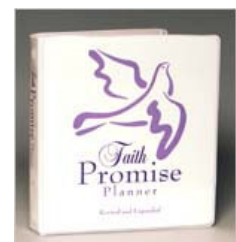
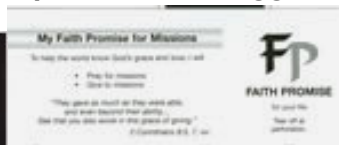
Download a printable Faith Promise brochure like this from the Stewardship Ministries site: <http://www.nazarene.org/ministries/NFS/stewardship/offering/faithpromise/display.aspx>



FAITH PROMISE is one of the most meaningful methods for supporting missions. It is not a pledge.

A FAITH PROMISE is exactly what it says — a promise made in faith between an individual and God.

There are also other great resources such as posters, bulletin inserts, worship folders, video resources, clip art, focus planner, and suggestions for room lay out.



Faith Promise Models for a Variety of Churches

Churches of any size can—with planning—host a faith promise event. Whether your church is small, medium, or large and whether the event is a single-service occasion or consists of several services over the course of a weekend, churches around the world are finding that faith promise is a tremendous way to promote missions giving in the Church of the Nazarene.

The following are actual faith promise plans from churches of various sizes. Use the plans as they are or adapt them to fit your church's needs. (It might be helpful to read all of them, as some ideas might apply to your church, even though they were used for a church of a different size.)

For the Church of Fewer than 50

For the Gallup Church of the Nazarene, the annual faith promise event is the highlight of the church year. The congregation's attendance averages 35-50. In planning the convention we use the following process:

Step 1—Select speaker and date as far in advance as possible.

We have scheduled as much as four years in advance. The new home assignment (deputation) schedules make planning a challenge, and advance planning is a necessity. Believe it or not, we have found Labor Day weekend a good weekend (if we can secure a speaker), and we actually close with a picnic on Labor Day.

Step 2—Select a theme. There are theme suggestions at <www.nazarenemissions.org/faithpromise>.

Faith Promise Themes Galore

- David Mays • *Advancing Churches in Missions Commitment*

- A Church in Every Nation
- A Needy World, a Saving Message
- A Waiting World—A Willing Church?
- Be a World Changer
- Before the Window Closes
- For the Sake of the Call
- Founded on the Word, Focused on the World
- From the Cross, Through the Church, To the World
- Gaining What Can't Be Lost
- Get a Job! In the Harvest
- Giving Our Lives in Each Generation
- Go for the Globe
- God's News and World Report
- His Plan, Our Purpose
- Missions in the Marketplace
- Missions: Lifework, Homework
- Our Best for Our Master
- The Unfinished Task: It Can Be Done
- The Word for the World
- The World Is Changing... But the Need Remains
- The World Is on God's Heart...Is It on Yours?
- The World Is Waiting
- They Can't Wait Forever
- To Whom Much Is Given
- Unto the Uttermost Part of the Earth
- Vision Without Boundaries
- We Found It; Let's Share It!
- When God Weeps
- Whenever, Whoever, Wherever
- Where There Is No Vision... The People Perish
- While There Is Still Time
- Whosoever!
- Within Our Reach
- Won-by-One
- World Crisis—My Involvement
- YOUnited in Mission

Editor's Note: These themes are from a notebook on missions conferences by David May from Advancing Churches in Missions Commitment (ACMC). The list is used with permission. For more information on ACMC, check out these Web sites: www.ACMC.org or www.awww.DavidMays.org.

Step 3—Determine the schedule and format. We usually plan a three-day convention. For example:

- Friday Evening—A casual event or party atmosphere makes it easy to get acquainted with the speaker(s).
- Saturday—We plan one or two events. Some years the men and women meet separately for breakfast or brunch. An early evening event is sometimes appropriate, but a picnic in the afternoon has yielded the best attendance.
- Sunday Morning—The children may meet separately for Sunday School or in a group session with the adults. The worship celebration should allow ample time for the guest speaker, as well as time to fill out

and collect the commitment cards.

- Sunday Noon—We plan a meal in the fellowship hall or go to a restaurant for Sunday dinner.
- Sunday Evening—When Sunday dinner is served in the fellowship hall, a Victory Service with a challenge from the speaker follows the dinner.

Step 4—Decide on hand-outs to coordinate with the theme.

We design a program with information for the **adults**. The computer makes it possible to produce a professional-looking book in color.

The **children** are provided with a folder containing a shiny new pencil, a small box of crayons, and activity sheets that appeal to various ages. We include pages to color as well as Bible mazes and word games. We try to use children's pages from *Mission Connection* and/or the Children's Mission Education packet.

Prayer reminders and theme reminders include magnetic prayer cards, candy, and other food items, plus items from a party supplier with clever phrases attached. We like to have at least one giveaway for each session.

Step 5—Special features are planned for interest and publicity.

Theme skits, songs, and music of various kinds are presented by all age groups. Decorations coordinating with the theme are used throughout the church.

*Pastor Tom and Fern Crider
Gallup, New Mexico*

For the Church of 50-99

The New Beginning Church of the Nazarene holds an annual faith promise convention. Our church's morning average attendance is in the low 80's. We have found that a Sunday convention suits our needs.

Planning

About one month before the convention, we begin decorating our fellowship hall. Taking the decoration theme from the speaker, we have attached paper globes to the walls, each bearing the name of a world area in which the Church of the Nazarene ministers. We have also attached paper flags from each nation. Also, a month before, bulletin inserts begin appearing. These inserts change weekly. One Sunday we define faith promise. Another Sunday we inform how faith promise funds are spent. Another Sunday will be the theme presentation.

For the faith promise convention, a booklet is prepared which functions as a comprehensive guide to Nazarene missions. In it is a description of ministries such as Alabaster, Missionary Health Care (formerly Medical Plan), Mission Corps (formerly Nazarenes in Volunteer Service), Nazarene Compassionate Ministries, etc. It also includes biographical information about our speaker.

Schedule

The first faith promise event happens during Sunday School. Typically we ask our speaker to teach a combined Sunday School class with the teens and adults in one room. The lesson has a missions emphasis.

The second event is the morning worship service. The hymns and Scripture readings are appropriate for a missions service. During the pastoral prayer, all active Nazarene missionaries are prayed for. Cards with missionaries' names and places of ministry (available from the World Mission Web site <www.nazareneworldmission.org>, Missionary Profiles) are distributed prior to the service so everyone present has several missionaries for whom to pray. After the speaker's sermon, commitment cards are distributed, and the congregation is given a week to return their commitment/amount to the church.

The third event is a luncheon. We have planned several different ways in which to have this luncheon. Sometimes we have asked that certain ethnic foods be brought, other times we've left food choice to the congregation.

*Pastor Wade Branard
North Canton, Ohio*

For the Church of 100-499

Faith Promise Weekend 2006 was a first at Winnsboro First Church of the Nazarene (Sunday morning worship attendance—approximately 150). Our mission-motivated pastor, Ron Pelton, began his ministry with us in January, and in March he suggested that we initiate faith promise.

Research, Planning, and Prayer

I immediately began research and gathered a lot of information from *Mission Connection* magazine and the NMI Web site (<www.nazarenemissions.org/faithpromise>), and I ordered the *Faith Promise Planner* (from Nazarene Publishing House; order number—S-3).

Our NMI council met with Pastor Ron, and he suggested a speaker who was willing to come, but who had limited open dates. We had a month to plan! The timeline in the *Faith Promise Planner* recommended a 3 year! This is when we began our plans with the first of the *Planner's* 12 sure-fire tips—we began to pray, pray, and PRAY.

Making the Theme Come to Life

I came across the “Hats Off to Faith Promise” theme idea on the NMI Web site (under Giving > World Evangelism Fund > WEF Promo Ideas). Our council met and accepted this. We formed committees, and everyone continued to pray, began brainstorming, and working. We mailed invitations—decorated with hats—to each family on our church mailing list. A woman in the community with an extensive hat collection loaned her hats for decorations. They were placed on a variety of stands as centerpieces and displays throughout the family life center. A council member made a huge top hat along with a “billboard” for the entrance. We cut hats out of construction paper and wrote the names of active/retired missionaries and the world areas where they serve/served. (These are still displayed on the walls around the room.)

Our faith promise booklet was hat-shaped, and our theme, date, and speaker's name were printed on each placemat with a colorful hat taped to the top corner! An important visual aid was our faith promise goal detailed and displayed on a large board—it stood in a prominent location in our sanctuary for several weeks. The “Hats Off to Faith Promise” hat show idea was wonderful! We adjusted it to accommodate our church's faith promise budget. A talented lady in our church decorated hats describing what faith promise giving provides. Most of the models were the council members. We encouraged attendance at our banquet by inviting our children's bell choir and sanctuary choir to minister to us during the evening.

Victory Service

On Sunday morning we presented the speaker with a pewter hat-shaped pin as a remembrance of Winnsboro's Faith Promise Weekend 2006—a wonderful time of working together, fellowship and motivation. The speaker's messages blessed our hearts, and God's enabling is evident as we continue to reach our goal and help fulfill the Great Commission.

*Norma Branham
Winnsboro, South Carolina*

For the Church of 500-999

Shawnee Church of the Nazarene averages around 500 on Sunday morning with two services. For faith promise Sunday morning, we have one combined service with a missionary speaker. The congregation, worship team, and choir sing missions-related music. We show a brief missions video (usually from the *World Mission DVD*). Prior to the missionary speaker, the senior pastor makes an announcement about the faith promise event on Sunday evening.

A Change of Venue

On Sunday evening, we have a big faith promise event at the Shawnee Civic Center (rented), which includes a large gymnasium with a commercial kitchen. The theme usually relates to the country where the missionary speaker ministers. Tables are set up with theme-related centerpieces. Commitment cards and pens are provided on the tables. The program/order of events for the evening doubles as a menu and also includes the biography of the missionary speaker, as well as interesting facts about Nazarene missions <www.nazarenemissions.org/facts>. A stage is set up with draping and a light rig and sound system, which are all acquired at a reduced rental cost because a church member works for the company.

For food, the NMI Council prepares a light meal to correlate with the theme (usually a traditional meal from the missionary speaker's country), allowing participants to "sample" the culture. Food is enjoyed during the entertainment segment.

To involve children, we have a variety of kids' activities (maze, puppet show, etc.) at the back of the room. Also, we have our children's stomp band perform during the evening. To encourage teen participation, we ask them to be servers, delivering the food/drinks. Teens also serve as greeters and have helped with the children's activities.

For the evening's entertainment, we have a multimedia presentation with PowerPoint slides, video, and special music—provided by the worship team and praise band, or a Christian rock/blues band made up of church members, and the children's stomp band. The missionary speaker is given time for a brief devotional. Then commitment cards are completed, turned in, and tallied. Children collect the commitment cards.

*Melinda Wolf Miller
Shawnee, Kansas*

For the Church of More than 1,000

At CrossRoads Church of the Nazarene, their faith promise event takes place during Sunday morning worship only. The church averages about 1,300 in their multiple morning worship services.

Order of Service

Missions Video Presentation—Keep it short and high-energy.

Scripture Reading During Intro of "We Speak to Nations"—Narrator should read with excitement. PowerPoint presentation accompanies the music and reader. The PowerPoint presentation is available on the NMI Web site <www.nazarenemissions.org/faithpromise>. Flags may be substituted to represent the world areas your speaker represents, where the church's Work & Witness teams may have visited, where members have lived/served, etc.

Choir—"We Speak to Nations" May be purchased <www.praisecharts.com>. Visitors to the site may listen to a sample of a recording of the song, download the song from iTunes, buy a version for lead/vocal sheet and piano part only, or buy a version with complete orchestration.

Orchestra continues playing while individuals speak/pray in different languages.

Worship Music—"Shout to the Lord" by Darlene Zschech; copyright: 1993 Hillsong Publishing/Integrity's Hosanna! Music

Welcome

PowerPoint Presentation on Faith Promise—Presented by the pastor. The presentation has scriptures about missions and giving, then shows the church's faith promise budget, briefly explaining how the various offerings help Nazarene missions. The PowerPoint presentation is available on the NMI Web site <www.nazarenemissions.org/faithpromise>. Your church's budget will need to be added, as well as any explanations, as these vary from church to church.

Offertory with Worship Music

Worship Music

Message

Closing Song—"Our Heart" by George T. Searcy and John Chisum; copyright 1993 Integrity's Hosanna! Music/Integrity's Praise! Music

*CrossRoads Church of the Nazarene
Chandler, Arizona*

12 Steps for Successful Faith Promise

1. Make Faith Promise the most important event of the church year. Create memories that will last.
2. Invite inspirational mission speakers and missionaries to be your guests.
3. Plan early and thoroughly, and pray fervently. Then, let the Lord honor and bless your efforts.
4. Involve the entire church family. If people are involved, they own the event. Ownership guarantees success.
5. Schedule three or more events during a Faith Promise weekend, if possible. Keep your speaker and people interacting and learning.
6. Establish a captivating theme. Plan the decor, music, program, and activities around this theme.
7. Promote, promote, promote well in advance.
8. Develop the Faith Promise budget. Take a step of faith. Set a goal that challenges.
9. Receive Faith Promise commitments during the service when you have the largest attendance. Build enthusiasm for reaching your goal.
10. Celebrate success! Plan a service to praise God and rejoice in what has been accomplished for others.
11. Track Faith Promise funds throughout the year. People need to see progress in reaching the goal.
12. **Pray. Pray first. Pray last. Pray daily. Pray often.** Saturate your efforts with intercession.

MISSIONS OFFERING POINTERS

1. Pray. Ask God to guide you.
2. Be specific about the need. Make certain the people know the purpose for the offering and the difference it will make.
3. Set a goal early. Make it both reachable and challenging.
4. Present the need in an interesting, appealing, clever way.
5. Assure the congregation that the offering will be used for that purpose only. (People won't give unless we are credible.)
6. Follow up. Track giving.
7. Remit all offerings in a timely manner.
8. Share results later—what was received, what it did, where it went.
9. Thank the people. Celebrate their faithfulness.
10. Above all, thank God!